



Research Article

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## « DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF PARENTS AS PREDICTORS OF CAREER PREFERENCE OF IN- SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS STUDENTS IN ABIA STATE »

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### Abstract:

This study investigated Demographic Variables of parents as predictor of career preference of in-school adolescents students in Abia State. Five research questions and five hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study. On the whole, 10% (690) of the SS2 senior secondary school (SS2) students in 2018/2019 academic sessions was selected from the three educational zones of Abia State namely, Umuahia Educational, Ohafia Education and Aba Educational Zones of Abia State. Two instruments used for data collection were developed questionnaire titled: Demographic Variable of Parents Questionnaire (SEBPQ) and Career Preference Questionnaire (CPQ). The instruments were structured into three sections as follows: (a) personal data, (b) Demographic Variables of parents, and (c) students career preference. The data for the study were collected by the researchers'. This was made possible with the help of the three research assistants who were Masters Students of the corresponding author. Out of the 690 copies of the questionnaire administered, 648 copies were returned and used for the analysis representing 96.6% rate of return. Data obtained through the administered questionnaire were organized and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the research questions while linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance.

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the study found that: parents' educational qualification positively predicted about 66% of career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State, parents' occupational background strongly and positively predicted about 23% of career preference of students and parents' financial background strongly, positively predicted about 62% of career preference of students, significant relationship between male and female students on career preference of senior secondary school students and significant relationship exist among urban and rural students on career preference of senior secondary school students. Based on the above findings of the study, it was therefore concluded that parents' educational qualification strongly and positively influences career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State. It is therefore recommended that: Counsellors should go beyond the academic field and help students to improve and understand how their perceptions of parents' educational qualification may shape their career preference in school.

**Keywords:** Demographic Variables, parents, Career Preference, Secondary School Students.

### 1. Introduction:

The In this era of unemployment, choosing the right career by young adolescents will pave way for employment opportunities for the adolescents in future. Career preference of the young adolescent has become an area of interest because educational planners have become aware of the dangers and frustrations suffered by some adolescents who find themselves in wrong

career selection (Ajila & Olutola, 2012). According to Ezeweani and Atomatofa (2012), career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining future plans. This decision might affect them throughout their lives if wrong decisions are made by them. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what he or she wants to do with his/her life-long work.

Many psychologists, guidance counsellors and educators have given various definitions of adolescence from time to time, in terms of physical, mental, social and emotional maturity; but there is a consensus among the psychologists – that adolescence is a transition period between childhood and adulthood (Osakinle&Adegoroye, 2018). It also includes the period of mental, emotional and social maturity as well as physical maturity. Chronologically, adolescence lies roughly between ages of 12 and 18 years and it is within this stage that they are in senior secondary schools in Nigeria and in Abia State. In this work in-school adolescents will be used in alternate with senior secondary school students.

Adolescents are faced with developmental needs which include, the need for physical activity, the need for competence and achievement, the need for self-definition, the need for creative expression, the need for position social interaction, the need for structure and clear limits and the need for meaningful participation. At adolescence stage people make their career related decisions which could have impact and consequences on the individuals' vocational future, psychological well-being and even health. The skills needed to make appropriate career decisions are very central to the psychological adjustment of the adolescent. While some adolescents do this with ease, others may have difficulties in making appropriate career choices (Faiter&Faiter, 2013).

Career choice decision-making is not an early task, yet at one time or the other individuals are faced with the task of making choice in career, preparing for it, starting and making progress in it. The choice point is undoubtedly the most critical stage. This is because making a wrong career decision can mar one's happiness in life as this could result to career maladjustment. Inappropriate career decision made may spell doom not only for the individual but also the entire society (Odoh, Odigbo&Chullwuani, 2017). As a result, the need to equip students with appropriate career-decision making skills becomes highly imperative. Hence, this study which examined how parental demographic variables predict career choice and preference of in-school adolescents.

Career is defined by the Oxford English dictionary as a person's course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life)". Career is a chosen pursuit, a life of work or success in a profession occupied by a person throughout his/her lifetime. In other words, career is the totality of work one does in one's life time (Eyo, 2011). Career plays a very fundamental and significant role in the life of the individual not only because it determines the pattern of income but also affects the individual's personality and concepts in life. A Career is the sequence of occupation in which one engages in. Some persons may retain or remain in the same occupation through their life span while others may have a series of life occupations (Egbochuku, in Faiter&Faiter, 2013). A career could also be defined as the sum total of life experience including paid or unpaid work, community, volunteer and family activities (Edwards & Quinter, 2011). Therefore, career can be seen as a product of career preference. Career preference may be defined as the aspect or types of work that people show more interest in and will most likely improve in it, that is work people like doing or like to do; for example, some might prefer to be self-employed rather than work in an office. Egbochuku and Akpan (2008) believe that the career a person prefers is an expression of the individual's personality. In the sense that, the choice of career one prefers determines to a large extent, how time will be spent, who will be chosen as friends, what attitudes and values will be adopted, where one will reside and what pattern of family living will be adopted.

In Nigeria, many youths go into unsuitable careers due to ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, parents and teachers influence and they may also prefer the prestige attached to certain jobs without considering mental abilities and personality traits (Braza&Guillo, 2015). Consequently, many of them are unsuited for their careers as they usually find themselves in a job where they could not satisfy their needs. When this occurs, they are likely to become frustrated and constitute nuisance to themselves and the society. Such individuals are not likely to contribute meaningfully to the society and ultimately become liability to the nation.

It is also a decision making in a confusing situation which occurs during the senior year of secondary school level (Walsh &Osipow, 2016). The term career preference means advancement in an organisation, a broader view defines career preference as an individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviours associated with the work-related activities and experiences over the span of a person's life (Catherine, 2016). In the past, people did not consider this term to be so complex and important. As at now and it is considered that when a person has a job, it is for a life long term. The researchers observe adolescence could be present with negative feel when engaging a wrong career path without congruence with his/her talent. This may include among others dissatisfaction – this is the most unsettling disadvantage of choosing the wrong career. The constant sensation of being in the wrong place will eat an adolescent piece of mind and may not allow him/her to sleep well until he/she make some life changing decisions, failure – This could be the most disappointing outcome of choosing a wrong career. Success does not come easy in the jobs that do not suit one. Most people fail to notice that success lays where their heart is, slow growth and possibility of depression, common outcome of dissatisfaction, failure and all things negative in life.

Demographic variables of a population is a statistical expression of such factors as age, gender, educational level, income level, religion, family size and death rate (Wikipedia, 2011). Bett (2013) saw demography as the study of a population based on factors such as age, race, sex, economic status, income, educational level and employment amongst others. These are used by government, corporations and non-governmental organizations to learn more about population characteristics for many purposes including policy development. According to Bates (2015), demographics variables are those aspects of society or cultures that are measurable and can be used to put people into categories. These include religion, income, sex, marital status, child status and race. By their nature, there may be significant relationships between some demographic characteristics such as age, gender, socio-economic status and grade level. Parents' demographics is the study of parents socio-economic factors such as age, educational qualification, employment, income, occupation and so on.

Socio-economic background (SEB) which is an economic and sociological measure of a person's work experience and an individual's or family's economic and social class in relation to others, based on income, education and occupation is another factor that could influence career preference. When analyzing a family's SEB, the household income, earners' education, and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, verse with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed (Diekmann, Krassnig and Lorenz, 1996). Socio-economic background is typically broken into three categories, high SEB, middle SEB, and low SES to describe the three areas a family or an individual may fall into. When placing a family or individual into one of these categories, any or all of the three variables (income, education, and occupation) can be assessed. A family's socio-economic status is based on family income, parental education attainment, parental occupation, and social status in the community (such as contacts within the community, group associations and the community's perception of the family) (Demarest 1993). Families with high socio-economic status often have more success in preparing their young children for school because they typically have access to wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development. They are able to provide their young children with high-quality child care, books, and toys to encourage children in various learning activities at home. Also, they have easy access to information regarding their children's health, as well as social, emotional status, often seeking out information to help them better prepare their young children. Chauhan (1990) observed that poverty of parents make it impossible to fulfil the legitimate basic physiological needs, and this could give rise to frustration which could ultimately trigger off wrong career choice. Nwankwo, Nwoke, Chukwuocha, Obbany, Nwoga, Iwuagwu and Okereke (2010) also noted that children born into impoverished environments might take to socially unacceptable behaviours as a survival strategy. Bett (2013) identified socio-economic background such as parental attitude, parental income, and peer pressure as factors influencing career choice. Student's careers have equally been studied with different frameworks. Many of them have focused on parents education, occupation or home background (like family income, language or the home activities of the family and work methods). Bates (2015) studied variables such as attitude, self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-concept or parents support such as motivation of wards, parental attitudes towards education, the aspiration of parents amidst these factors presumed to have relationship with career preference. Therefore, it becomes necessary to determine which of the factors that could relate with students career preference and of interest to the researcher is socio-economic background of parents.

Socio-economic background has a lot of roles to play in students' career preference. However, Ahma and Anwar (2013) agree that socio-economic background is measured with age, sex, occupation, residents and residential level as well as the social status in the community. Families that fall within high socio-economic status often have more access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development (Ahmar & Anwar, 2013). Coleman cited in Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia (2011), asserted that the influence of students background was greater than anything that goes on within schools. Researchers also believe that the socio-economic background of the parents has a great effect on in-school students' career preference (Abdulraheem, 2015, Gratz, 2016, Hafiz & Waqas, 2013). Socio-economic background of parents could be a factor that can influence student's career preference. Socio-economic background of parents refers to the qualification of an individual, that is, level of education acquired by an individual for example, non-formal education, primary or secondary school certificate, Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) and National Diploma (ND), Higher National Diploma (HND), Bachelors degree, Master's degree and Ph.D. With a higher level of education parents are more likely to function as a teacher in the home and provide a balance emotional stability as well as stimulating environment. This implies that the educational background of parents could influence how they structure their home environment and their interaction with their children in promoting their career preference. The study of Adeyemo (2011) revealed that among the factors that affect career decision making and career development, level of parents' education is also significant. In other words, adolescent from a well-educated and higher income family is expected to attain more education and aspire to higher status occupation. This was supported by Asikhia (2010) opined that a child that comes from an educated home would like to go into career of his/her family and by this, work actively in his/her studies relating to parents occupational status.

Socio-economic background of parents is the social and professional position of parent's occupation in relation to others. In other words, it is the position or status of one's occupation when compared to other available occupation like the unskilled occupation. Many adolescents in the urban areas tend to enter into different occupation, which they neither have aptitude nor capacity for more than those in rural area (Mehtar and Avneet, 2015). This might be due to the fact that their parents want

them to either inherit their vocation for maintaining their status or live the life they would have loved to live (Egbochuku, etla, 2008). Parents plan important roles in child education. The beliefs and expectations of parents can affect the occupational choices of students (Eytomilayo, 2018).

The study of Alika (2010) shows that the most important factors associated with career preference of children appears to be occupational status which determines their socio-economic status. Furthermore, Alika (2010) revealed that ninety-three percent of secondary school students in his study reported holding similar occupations and values to their parents. This is significant because it dispels the myth that children and adolescents tend to defy their parents' values and expectations. Instead, it may be more accurate to say that children are quick to adopt their parent's occupations and values, perhaps without ever exploring their own. This may be due to children's natural desire to connect with their parents (Aldefer, 2014). As a result, they are likely to leave out their career preferences and aspirations while adopting their parental values and occupation especially if the society rates such occupations higher than the others and are treated preferentially by others based on prestige and their unique salary packages. This is the reason why many youths according to Alika (2010) choose career like law, engineering, medicine, banking because most society has rated these group of careers high. This study therefore, seeks to examine demographic variables of parents as they relate to the adolescents career preference in Senior Secondary School Students in Abia State.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Career decisions tend to pose problem for students in the contemporary society, since it determines the kind of profession that they intend to pursue in life. That is why it is not uncommon for students to get into careers that are not quite suitable to their abilities. Socio-economic background of parents on the other hand, tends to be one of the most influential factors in students career preference. More often than not, parents owing to level of education or personal idea tend to put pressure on their wards into taking up family occupations and other careers such as prestigious jobs e.g. Medicine, Engineering, Law and so on, even when they do not possess requisite abilities. The tendency may also be there for the children to identify with their parents by taking up their occupations. Moreover, in the traditional African society, there was tendency towards encouraging youths to enter the profession owned by family in order to jealously guide the skill owned by their parents. As a result of this pressure from parents, the students may end up being dissatisfied, frustrated and unable to be effective on the said job that parents had chosen for them. But, an individual who has chosen career that he/she prefers may derive satisfaction and fulfilment in life and therefore contribute meaningfully towards national development.

In addition to these, a wrong choice is a bane to planning in terms of furthering education or technical training, which one is expected to undergo before actually entering the occupation. It may lead to job insecurity; faulty planning can mar ones happiness for life and could cause occupational maladjustment. This may also directly or indirectly lead to emotional maladjustment. Secondary school students or in-school adolescents are likely to encounter conflicts with their parents and crises in their choice of career, if they are not properly guided before choosing their career. Lack of appropriate career information made available to the adolescent and career guidance by parents, teachers and counsellors might lead to frustration and unhappy individuals. Therefore, there is need to empirically investigate if demographic variables of parents have any relationship with career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State.

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to find out whether demographic variables of parents predict career preference of senior secondary school students.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the relationship between parents educational qualifications and students career preference among in-school adolescents in Abia State.
2. determine the relationship between parents occupational background and career preference among in-school adolescents.
3. ascertain the relationship between parents financial background in-school adolescents career preference.
4. find out the relationship between gender and career preference among in-school adolescents.
5. Find out the relationship between parental location (urban and rural) and career preference among in-school adolescents.
- 6.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the purpose of this study, the following research questions were posed to guide the researchers in the effective collection of the data:

1. What is the relationship between parents' educational qualifications and in-school adolescents career preference in Abia State?

2. What is the relationship between parents' occupational background and career preference of in-school adolescents?
3. What is the relationship between parents' financial background and in-school adolescents' career preference?
4. Find out the relationship between gender and career preference of in-school adolescents?
5. What is the relationship between parental location (urban and rural) and career preference of senior secondary school students?

### HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance to guide the study.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between parents' educational qualifications and career preference of in-school adolescents in Abia State.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between parents' occupational background and career preference of in-school adolescents.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between parents' financial background and in-school adolescents' career preference.

**Ho<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between gender and career preference of in-school adolescents.

**Ho<sub>5</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between parental location (urban and rural) and career preference of in-school adolescents.

### METHODOLOGY

#### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The study adopted correlational research design. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) define correlational design as the measure or determination of the linear relationship or association between two variables. Correlation research design was employed in order to identify the magnitude and strength of relationship between demographic variables of parents and the career preference of their in-school adolescents.

#### POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of this study consisted of SSII of the 2018/2019 session of secondary school students in-school adolescents from Public Secondary schools in Abia State. The total population was 6,900 students from twelve public secondary schools in the three educational zones of Abia State namely, Umuahia Educational, Ohafia Education and Aba Educational Zone. The reason for choosing public secondary schools is because the students' population of these institutions cuts across board as many of the students come from different ethnic groups and different cultural background. Again, the students have stayed in the school up to five years unlike JSS1-SS1. Moreover, they are not in examination classes like JSS3 and SS3. So, it is assumed that SSII students participated out of interest and ability.

#### SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The sample for this study consisted of 690 respondents (289 males and 401 females) SSII students drawn through multistage sampling technique from secondary school students in secondary schools in Abia State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select four (4) secondary schools in each of the three educational zones of Abia State. In the same way, proportionate sampling technique was used to select 10% of the students from each of the public secondary schools. This gave a total of 690 (289 males and 401 females) secondary school students. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) suggested that when the population is large, between five percent and 20% could be used for a study.

#### INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Two instruments were developed by the researcher for the study through extensive review of literature. They are: Demographic Variable of Parents Questionnaire (DVPQ) and Career Preference Questionnaire (CPQ).

The questionnaire was structured to reflect the research questions and the hypotheses. It was divided into three sections A, B and C. Section "A" elicited information on personal data of the respondents. Section B of the questionnaire contain information on socio-economic status while Section C elicited information on career preference which was scaled using 4-point response options of Strongly Agree (SA) (4 points); Agree (A) (3 points); Disagree (D) (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD) (1 point). The negative items of the instrument were reversely scored.

#### 3.6 VALIDATION OF THE INSTRUMENT

The two instruments were subjected to face and content validation in order to ascertain the relevance in the present study. In view of this, the instruments were given to three experts from Educational Psychology, one from Guidance and Counselling and one from Measurement and Evaluation Departments, all from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Umudike. The valuator

checked the face validity and content of the instrument so as to ensure the suitability of language, its clarity, relevance of items to the study and total coverage in addressing the research questions, bearing in mind the purpose of the study captured in the present research. Their corrections were effected on the final copy of the instrument produced.

**RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT**

A trial testing were done using twenty secondary school students in-school adolescents from Bende local government area which is entirely outside the area used for the study. The data generated through the trial testing of the instruments were analyzed using Cronbach alpha method to determine the internal consistency which yielded reliability indices of  $r = 0.73$  for Demographic Variables of Parents Questionnaire (DVPQ) and  $r = 0.83$  for Career Preference Questionnaire (CPQ) respectively. Also, the stability of the instruments was determined using Pearson’ Product Moment Correlation Coefficient which gave reliability index of .81 and .77 respectively.

**METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

The validated research instruments were administered by the researchers with the help of three research assistants who were Masters Students of the corresponding author. This was to ensure that the questionnaire were adequately administered and collected at once. The researchers’ educated the assistants on how to administer correctly the questionnaire. The respondents were instructed on how to answer the questions in the questionnaire. The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected on the spot after filling by the respondents. Out of 690 questionnaires distributed, 648 were properly filled and returned making it 99 percent return.

**METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The data which were obtained through the administration of the instruments were analyzed using Pearson Moment Product Correlation to answer the research questions; while linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The response was guided by 0.00 - 0.20 (Very low relationship), 0.21 – 0.40 (low relationship), 0.41 – 0.60 (Moderate relationship), 0.61 – 0.80 (High relationship) and 0.81 – 1.00 (Very high relationship).

**RESULTS**

The results of this study were presented in line with the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

**Research Question One**

What is the relationship between parents’ educational qualification and students’ career preference of in-school adolescents in Abia State?

The data for answering research question one is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Correlation of Parents’ Educational Qualification and In-School Adolescents’ Career Preference.**

	Parents’ Educational Qualification	Career Preference Of adolescents
<b>Parents’ Educational Qualification</b>		
Pearson Correlation	1	<b>0.657</b>
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
N	648	648
<b>Career Preference of adolescents</b>		
Pearson Correlation	<b>0.657</b>	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
N	648	648

The data presented in Table 1 revealed that the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) between parents’ educational qualification and career preference of in-school adolescents was 0.657. This indicated that the identified parents’ educational qualification predicted about 66% of Career Preference of secondary school students. Therefore, there is strong and positive relationship between parents’ educational qualification and career preference of secondary school students in the study area.

A corresponding hypothesis formulated to further address the research question is presented as hypothesis I

**Hypothesis One**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between parents’ educational qualification and career preference of in-school adolescents in Abia State.

The data for testing hypothesis one is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Parents’ Educational Qualification and Career Preference of in-school adolescents Students in Abia State.**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
Regression	202.718	1	202.718	181.088	0.000	<b>S*</b> (Reject H <sub>01</sub> )
Residual	538.453	648	1.119			
Total	741.171	648				

a. Dependent Variable: Career Preference  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Parents Educational Qualification  
**Level of Sig.** = 0.05; **S\*** = Significant

The result of the regression analysis presented in Table 2 above showed that the p-value of 0.000 was less than 0.05 level of significance. This implied that there is significant relationship between parent’s educational qualification and career preference of senior secondary school students. Therefore, the hypothesis (H<sub>01</sub>) of there is no significant relationship between parents’ educational qualification and career preference of senior secondary school students is rejected.

**Research Question Two**

What is the relationship between parents’ occupational background and career preference of senior secondary school students?

The data for answering research question three is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Correlation of Parents’ Occupational Background and Career Preference**

		Parents’ Occupational Background	Career Preference
<b>Parents’ Occupational Background</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	<b>0.327</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.548
	N	648	648
<b>Career Preference</b>	Pearson Correlation	<b>0.227</b>	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.548	
	N	648	648

The data presented in Table 3 showed that the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) between parents’ occupational background and career preference of senior secondary school students was 0.227. This indicated that parents’ occupational background predicted about 23% of career preference of senior secondary school students. Therefore, there is weak but positive relationship between parents’ occupational background and career preference senior secondary school students in the study area.

A corresponding hypothesis formulated to further address the research question is presented as Hypothesis II

**Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant relationship between parents’ occupational background and career preference of senior secondary school students.

The data for testing hypothesis two is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Parents’ Occupational Background and Career Preference of Senior Secondary School Students.**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
Regression	.557	1	0.557	0.362	0.548	<b>NS</b> (Accept H <sub>02</sub> )
Residual	740.614	648	1.540			
Total	741.171	648				

a. Dependent Variable: Career Preference  
 b. Predictor: (Constant), Parents’ occupational background  
**Level of Sig.** = 0.05; **NS** = Not Significant

The result of the regression analysis presented in Table 4 above revealed that the p-value of 0.548 was greater than 0.05 level of significance. This indicated that there is no significant relationship between parents’ occupational background and career preference of senior secondary school students. Hence, the hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub><sub>2</sub>); of there is no significant relationship between parents’ occupational background and career preference of senior secondary school students is accepted.

**Research Question Three**

What is the relationship between parents’ financial background and students’ career preference of senior secondary school students?

The data for answering research question three are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Correlation of Parents’ Financial Background and Students’ Career Preference**

		Parent’s Financial Background	Career Preference
<b>Parent’s Financial Background</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	<b>0.623</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	648	648
<b>Career Preference</b>	Pearson Correlation	<b>0.623</b>	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	648	648

The data presented in Table 5 revealed that the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) between parent’s financial background and career preference of senior secondary school students was 0.623. This indicated that parent’s financial background predicted about 62% of career preference of senior secondary school students. Therefore, there is strong and positive relationship between parent’s financial background and career preference of senior secondary school students in the study area.

A corresponding hypothesis formulated to further address the research question is presented as Hypothesis 3

**Hypothesis Three**

There is no significant relationship between parents’ financial background and students’ career preference of senior secondary school students.

The data for testing hypothesis three are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Parents’ Financial Background and Students’ Career Preference**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
Regression	336.593	1	336.593	300.174	0.000	<b>S*</b> (Reject H <sub>0</sub> <sub>3</sub> )
Residual	404.578	648	.841			
Total	741.171	648				

- a. Dependent Variable: Career Preference
  - b. Predictors: (Constant), Parent’s financial background
- Level of Sig. = 0.05; S\* = Significant**

From the result of the regression analysis presented in Table 6 above, it was revealed that the p-value of 0.000 was less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that Parent’s financial background is significantly predicted by students’ career preference. Hence, the hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub><sub>3</sub>) of there is no significant relationship between parents’ financial background and students’ career preference of senior secondary school students is rejected.

**Research Question Four**

Find out the relationship between gender and career preference of senior secondary school students?

Data for answering research question 4 are presented in Table 7.



**Table 7: Correlation of Gender and Career Preference of Senior Secondary School Students**

		Male	Female
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.723
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	848	848
Career PPreference	Pearson Correlation	.784	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	848	848

Male and Female\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 7 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of .72 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of  $\pm 0.61 - 0.80$ . This indicates that male students to a high positive extent relate with career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State. The table also indicates a relationship coefficient (r) of .78 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of  $\pm 0.61-0.80$ . This indicates that female to a high positive extent relate with career preference of senior secondary school students.

**Hypothesis Four**

There is no significant relationship between gender and career preference of senior secondary school students. Data for testing hypothesis 4 are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: Regression Analysis of Gender and Career Preference of Senior Secondary School Students**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	216.532	2	72.177	248.031	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	255.582	648	.291		
Total	472.114	648			

Df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 8 show that the calculated F-value of 248.031 has a probability value of .000 which is less than the alpha value of .05. This means that there is a significant relationship among male and female students on career preference of senior secondary school students. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant relationship among female students on career preference of senior secondary school students was rejected.

**Research Question Five**

What is the relationship between parental location (urban and rural) and career preference of senior secondary school students?

Data for answering research question 5 are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9: Correlation of between Parental Location (urban and rural) and Career Preference of Senior Secondary School Students**

		Urban	Rural
Parental L	Pearson Correlation	1	.713
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	848	848
Career Preference	Pearson Correlation	.774	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	848	848

Urban and Rural \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 9 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of .71 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of  $\pm 0.61 - 0.80$ . This indicates that urban students to a high positive extent relate with career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State. The table also indicates a relationship coefficient (r) of .77 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of  $\pm 0.61-0.80$ . This indicates that rural students to a high positive extent relate with career preference of senior secondary school students.

### Hypothesis Five

There is no significant relationship between parental location (urban and rural) and career preference of senior secondary school students

Data for testing hypothesis 5 are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10: Regression Analysis of Parental Location (Urban and Rural) and Career Preference of Senior Secondary School Students**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	216.532	2	72.177	248.031	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	255.582	648	.291		
Total	472.114	648			

Df= degree of freedom, F = F-calculated, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Data in Table 10 show that the calculated F-value of 248.031 has a probability value of .000 which is less than the alpha value of .05. This means that there is a significant relationship among urban and rural students on career preference of senior secondary school students. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant relationship between parental location (urban and rural) and career preference of senior secondary school students was rejected.

### DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS

The discussions on findings of this study are presented in line with the research questions and hypotheses stated for the study:

#### Relationship between Parents' educational qualification and career preference

This study found that parents' educational qualification predicted about 66% of career preference of senior secondary school students. This result also indicated that parents' educational qualification is responsible for about 66% variations in career preference of senior secondary school students.

The findings of this study corroborated the result of the study of Jeofrey (2017) who investigated factors that influence the choice of career pathways among high school students in Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. The study also revealed that schools had an impact on choice of careers among students. The study recommended the training of parents, peers and teachers to enhance students' choice of careers. The researchers observed that parents are the first teachers of their children. In the light of this, parental education tends to influence student's academic performance and career preference. Also, children from families where parents have less education tends to perform systematically worse in school than pupils whose parents have more education. To this, educated parents could provide intellectual, economical, psychological and emotional support to their children who in turn make them to be more comfortable and adjusted to their learning development, and this result in high academic performance and better career preference and choice.

#### Parents' occupational background influence on career preference

This study found that parents' occupational background predicted 23% of career preference among senior secondary school students. This indicated that parents' occupational background is responsible for about 23% in the variations of career preference of senior secondary school students.

The findings of this study agreed with that of Mairo (2017) investigation on the influence of nurturing styles on career choice of secondary school students in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The results revealed that significant influence exist between parental nurturing styles and career choice of students. It was concluded that acceptance nurturing style has positive influence on career choice than emotional concentration and avoidance nurturing styles, as students from acceptance nurturing style have good career choice and are more confident in the choice of career. Parent occupation background would be in good position to be second teachers to their child. And even to guide and counsel their children on the best way to perform well in education. And provide necessary materials needed by their children towards appropriate career pathway.

#### Parent's financial background influence on career preference

This study found that parent's financial background predicted about 62% of career preference of senior secondary school students. This indicated that parent's financial background is responsible for about 62% influence in career preference of senior secondary school students'.

The findings of this study are in line with that of Victoria (2016) investigated the relationships among parents' educational level, income, academic adjustment and performance of senior secondary school students in Kaduna Metropolis, Nigeria. The findings revealed that significant positive relationship exists between Parental educational level and academic performance of

senior secondary school students,  $r = .651$   $p = .011$ , significant positive relationship exists between Parental income level of senior secondary students,  $r = .550$   $p = .012$ , significant positive relationship exists between Parental Educational of senior secondary school students,  $r = .505$   $p = .037$  and significant positive relationship exists between Parental income level and of senior secondary school students,  $r = .842$   $p = .000$ . The researcher understand the role parents' financial strength plays in influencing students' career pathway. In light of this, financial stable parents have the potential of assist their children to do homework given to them by the school and engaging a private teacher that will coach them at home. In fact, by virtue of their financial background, they tend to involve fully in their children' learning development. They are more likely to keep in touch with the school authority about progress or otherwise of their children education. These advantages mentioned could trigger the children to perform academically well than their counterpart from uneducated and less financial stable parents. The more supportive and conducive environment a child gets a more academic achievement would be attained.

#### Male and Female Influence on Career Preference

From the results, it is observed that the relationship coefficient between male and female is very high, substantial and significant. The study is in line with the finding of the Okwo (2013) who examined demographic characteristics (age, gender, socio-economic status and grade level) as predict of social competence and emotional intelligence of Junior Secondary (JS) students in Nsukka, Enugu State.

The results showed that the demographic variables namely age, gender, socio-economic status and grade level explained 13.1% ( $R^2 = .131$ ) of the variance in social competent and 10.8% ( $R^2 = .180$ ) of the variance in emotional intelligence. Age ( $t = -3.569$ ,  $p < .000$ ), gender ( $t = 3.157$ ,  $p < .002$ ) and grade level ( $t = 5.172$ ,  $p < .000$ ) significantly predicted social competence. Age ( $t = -3.426$ ,  $p < .001$ ), gender ( $t = 2.326$ ,  $p < .021$ ) and grade level ( $t = 4.216$ ,  $p < .000$ ) also significantly predicted emotional intelligence of the students at  $p < .05$ . Socio-economic status did not significantly predict emotional intelligence ( $t = 1.682$ ,  $p < .094$ ) and social competence ( $t = .705$ ,  $p < .482$ ) at  $p < .05$ . Based on the findings, it was recommended that demographic characteristics such as age, gender and grade level should be considered when taking decisions related to social competence and emotional intelligence of students in Junior Secondary Schools.

#### Urban and Rural Influence on Career Preference

From the results, it is observed that the relationship coefficient between urban and rural is very high, substantial and significant. The study is in line with the finding of the Mehar and Avneet (2015) who examined career choice preferences among rural and urban adolescents in relation to their intelligence.

The study consisted of 200 students of 10th class randomly drawn from four different schools of Amritsar district. Data was collected with the help of career choice preferences checklist by Bhargava and Bhargava (2004) and intelligence test by Raven, Raven and Court (2000) was used. The data obtained were analyzed statistically with the help of Mean, SD, t-ratio and correlation was used to arrive at the following conclusions: (i) There existed significant difference between the career choice preferences of rural and urban adolescents with respect to mass media and journalism, artistic and designing, science and technology, agriculture, commerce and management, defence, education and law & order. (ii) There existed significant difference between the intelligence of rural and urban adolescents. (iii) There existed significant difference between the dimensions of career choice preferences of adolescent boys and girls. (iv) There existed significant difference between the intelligence of adolescent boys and girls. (v) There existed significant relationship between the dimensions of career choice preferences and intelligence of rural adolescents. (vi) There existed significant relationship between the dimensions of career choice preferences and intelligence of urban adolescents. (vii) There existed significant relationship between the dimensions of career choice preferences and intelligence of adolescent boys. (viii) There existed significant relationship between the dimensions of career choice preferences and intelligence of adolescent girls. (ix) There existed significant and positive relationship between the dimensions of career choice preferences and intelligence of total sample.

#### SUMMARY

This study investigated Demographic Variables of parents as predictor of career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State. Five research questions and five null hypotheses guided the study. Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study. On the whole, 10% (690) of the SS2 senior secondary school (SS2) students in 2018/2019 academic sessions was selected from the three educational zones of Abia State namely, Umuahia Educational, Ohafia Education and Aba Educational Zones of Abia State. Two instruments used for data collection was developed questionnaire titled: Demographic Variables of Parents Questionnaire (SEBPQ) and Career Preference Questionnaire (CPQ). The instruments were structured into three sections as follows: (a) personal data, (b) Demographic Variables of parents, and (c) students career preference. To justify the suitability of the researchers' instruments for this study, a copy of the instruments was submitted to the three other lecturers for validation. Ambiguous items were removed and replaced with suitable ones. In addition, all the corrections and suggestions of the validates were effected to improve the quality of the instruments used for data collection. To establish the internal consistency of the instrument, 30 copies of the instruments were trial-tested on 30 students different from the ones used in the

main study. The data collected from the trial testing were analysed using Cronbach Alpha technique which yielded a coefficient of  $r = 0.73$ , for Demographic Variable of Parents Questionnaire (SEBPQ),  $r = 0.83$  for Career Preference Questionnaire (CPQ). Also, the stability of the instruments was determined using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient which gave reliability indices of .81 and .77 respectively. The data for the study were collected by the researchers'. This was made possible with the help of the three research assistants who were Masters Students of the corresponding author. Out of the 690 copies of the questionnaire administered, 648 copies were returned and used for the analysis representing 96.6% rate of return. Data obtained through the administered questionnaire were organized and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to answer the research questions while linear regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. Based on the data collected and analyzed, the study found that:

1. Parent's educational qualification positively predicted about 66% of career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State.
2. Parents' occupational background strongly and positively predicted about 23% of career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State.
3. Parent's financial background strongly and positively predicted about 62% of career preference of senior secondary school students.
4. There is a significant relationship among male and female students on career preference of senior secondary school students.
5. There is a significant relationship among urban and rural students on career preference of senior secondary school students

### CONCLUSION

Based on the above findings of the study, it was therefore concluded that parents' educational qualification strongly and positively influences career preference of senior secondary school students in Abia State. In addition, parents' educational qualification is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) in influencing career preference of senior secondary school students. Parents' educational qualification has significant influence on career preference of secondary school students. In addition, parents' occupational background and parents' financial background strongly and positively predict career preference of senior secondary school students.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the conclusions of this study, it is therefore recommended that:

1. Advisors should go beyond the academic field and help students to improve and understand how their perceptions of parents' educational qualification may shape their career preference in school.
2. Teachers, religious leaders, school management, school administrators and counselling psychologists should use appropriate psychological interventions to enhance career preference understanding and adaptability of students.
3. Teachers in schools should not only focus on cognitive domain in teaching high-achieving individuals but also tailor their teaching towards the affective construct (socio-economic status and career preference) of the students.
4. Parents are to seek both cognitive and affective solutions to their children's career challenges in schools.
5. Other stakeholders in education such as school administrative personnel should ensure that psychological well-being of students are adequately catered for in order to enhance sound knowledge about their career preference.
6. Parents are charged to effectively pay attention to their children and their career interest in order to help them make appropriate career choices.
7. School authorities should develop a proper policy that will address the problem of urban to rural migration and student career problem in schools. Special staff and counsellors should be trained to handle and counsel students with relative to career choice and selection.

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